

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 EB-07 L-03 HUD-01

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INRE-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 IO-13 COME-00

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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4366

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 797

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 6795

FROM THE AMBASSADOR FOR ATHERTON

USUN PASS ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TS, USTSJC, EAID, EFIN, EINV

SUBJECT: JOINT COMMISSION: ATHERTON MEETING WITH
CHATTI SEPTEMBER 30

REF: TUNIS 6659, TUNIS 6086, TUNIS 6202, TUNIS 6629

1. HAMED AMMAR, FMA DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, CALLED IN USAID DIRECTOR HERMON DAVIS TODAY (SEPT 29) TO EXPRESS GOT CONCERN THAT UPCOMING JOINT COMMISSION (JC) MEETING MAY BE A NON-EVENT, EMPHASIZING THAT GOT CANNOT AFFORD IMPRESSION OF LACK OF INTEREST ON PART OF KEY TRADITIONAL DONOR AT KICK-OFF STAGE TO 5-YEAR PLAN. AMMAR SUGGESTED THAT MORE DETAILED PICTURE OF US INTENTIONS WOULD BE VERY WELCOME, HINTING THAT GOT MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER PROPOSING POSTPONEMENT OF JC MEETING WERE US POSTURE NOT SEEN AS SUFFICIENTLY FORTHCOMING. AMMAR ADDED THAT GOT WAS PREPARING "INSTRUCTIONS" TO FONMIN CHATTI, APPARENTLY IN ANTICIPATION OF YOUR MEETING SEPT 30.

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2. WISH TO ALERT YOU TO THIS SITUATION FOR SEVERAL REASONS, ALL OF WHICH LEAD ME TO BELIEVE THAT POSTPONEMENT OF JC MEETING WOULD BE UNDESIRABLE AND CLEARLY CONTRARY TO TUNISIA'S BEST INTERESTS. I BELIEVE THAT ON BASIS OF RECENT FORWARD MOVEMENT ON SEVERAL AID PROGRAMS (RURAL DEVELOPMENT, RURAL HEALTH, HOUSING INVESTMENT GUARANTEE) WE WILL BE IN A POSITION DURING THE JC DISCUSSIONS TO BE POSITIVE CONCERNING US ASSISTANCE TO TUNISIA. ALSO, AS I HAVE POINTED OUT TO GOT LEADERSHIP, TUNISIA HAS FRIENDS IN PLACE AND COOPERATIVE WORK UNDERWAY WHICH WOULD BE DISSIPATED BY POSTPONEMENT OF MEETING BEYOND PRESENT OCTOBER TIMING.

3. THIS CABLE WILL BE FOLLOWED BY SEPARATE MESSAGES OUTLINING OUR REASONS FOR SUPPORTING GOT REQUEST FOR 80,000 METRIC TONS OF WHEAT UNDER PL-480 TITLE I. RECENT MESSAGES IPCLUDING TUNIS 6086, 6202, 6629 AND 6659 HAVE RECOMMENDED POSSIBLE US PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE TO GOT IN FINANCING 5TH PLAN. THESE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE THE RESULT OF LONG DELIBERATIONS BY ALL ELEMENTS OF THIS MISSION, AND ARE DRAWN FROM SPECIFIC GOT REQUESTS. IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR US TO BE IN POSITION TO INDICATE GENERAL OUTLINES OF US ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR 5TH PLAN - EVEN IF SPECIFIC PROJECTS NOT ELABORATED.

4. I WOULD HOPE, IF CHATTI RAISES POSTPONEMENT POSSIBILITY WITH YOU, YOU WILL MAKE REASSURING NOISES AND CONVINCE HIM TO KEEP JC MEETING ON SCHEDULE.
MULCAHY

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